AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF MUSLIM STUDENTS’ RELIGIOSITY AND TRAVELLING BEHAVIOR TO GAMING DESTINATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Scholars in the tourism industry are continuously looking for new knowledge related to travel behavior, motivations, and the preferences of the main tourist segments. Demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural variables can all influence the demand for travel. Despite numerous studies on most of the demographic and socioeconomic variables, scholars have paid very little attention to religiosity with regard to travel decision-making. Specifically, no researchers have investigated the role of Islamic religiosity in predicting Muslims’ destination choice decisions. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the role of attitudes, subjective norms, travel motivations, Islamic religiosity, self-efficacy, travel constraints, constraints negotiation strategies, and past behavior on Muslim students’ intentions to travel to a gaming destination. To account for much of the variation in the proposed model, the researcher includes these eight variables. The researcher attempts to explain the relationships between these constructs, as well as their effect on travel behavior. In doing so, the researcher initially hypothesized that Islamic religiosity and travel motivation, apart from influencing travel intention, directly influence Muslims’ attitudes toward gaming destinations. Furthermore, the researcher hypothesized that Islamic religiosity moderates the relationship between Muslims’ attitudes and their travel intentions.
The sample population of this dissertation consists of Muslim students enrolled in a United States university or college. The researcher recruited respondents through a multi-stage sampling procedure and the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. The researcher collected 679 usable questionnaires for the data analysis of the study and used partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis to test the study hypotheses.

The results indicate that Islamic religiosity negatively influences the actual behavior to travel to a gaming destination. The results also reveal that travel intention is positively influenced by respondents’ motivation, attitude, subjective norms, past behavior, and travel constraints. Additionally, the researcher shows through the dissertation findings that Islamic religiosity and travel motivation directly influence Muslims’ attitudes toward gaming destinations. Furthermore, Islamic religiosity, as a moderating construct, influences the relationship between the attitude of Muslim travelers and their intention to travel to a gaming destination. The dissertation findings provide important practical and theoretical implications to destination marketers and to tourism and hospitality literature.